



## COMMUNION SUNDAYS

*“WHAT & WHO we SEE Inside the Armenian Church”*

### Communion Sunday #6 - SERVERS OF THE CHURCH

**Parish Council** - The Parish Council is the Executive Body of the Parish as elected in the Annual Parish Assembly. Its function is to guide the Parish in its spiritual, educational and financial endeavors in cooperation with and under the leadership of the Parish Priest. Each parish Council member is expected to serve in a spirit compatible with such responsibility. Since this responsibility extends beyond financial matters, each Councilman should strive to be adequately informed in all matters relating to the Parish and the Church in general. A good Parish Council member never loses sight of the fact that he is a servant of Christ and His Church. He, therefore, seeks to increase his own capacity to understand the nature of the Church as the community of believers. The Armenian Church is both a spiritual institution and the depository of Armenia culture as well. The Councilman should strive to be a good Church member and an example to the rest of the parishioners.

**Ushers** - Parish Council members or specially designated Ushers should see to it that the front pews of the Church are filled first, and that the aisles are clear as long as there are no more people in the congregation than the pews can accommodate. At least two Ushers must be present in the Church at the beginning of the Services. Ushers must be available in the Church Narthex to guide the incoming worshippers to their seats. Ushers serving in the Church shall make sure that people enter the Church and participate in the Worship Services rather than congregate outside and loiter. Ushers should choose a place of their own inside the Church so that they will be available for any necessary service without disturbing the congregation. Everyone must assist his colleagues on duty without complaint.

**Ladies Society** - All married and single ladies 21 years old and over, who are baptized and/or confirmed according to the rites of the Armenian Church, and who express willingness to be loyal members of the Armenian Church and this organization, may join the Ladies' Society. Ladies' Society members are to study, to practice and to propagate the teachings of the Holy Scriptures and the doctrines and the rites of the Armenian Church, to study the history, the traditions and the customs of the Armenian Church and its people, to cultivate Christian virtues of mutual love and of cooperation toward one another and toward other organizations within the Parish Church community, to

develop among its members an appreciation of the Armenian cultural heritage, to endeavor, in practice, to live up its values, to make the growth of Sunday School and of Armenian Language School a special concern of the organization, to contribute to and use all means to make them instruments for the progress of the Armenian Church, to work for the beautification of the Parish Church, and to cooperate with the Pastor and the Parish Council of the Parish Church in order that all the Parish undertakings may be fruitful.

**Collection Plate** - Donations are a vital part of the sustainability of the Church. It must be borne in mind that the offering made by the faithful is an integral part of the Divine Liturgy. It must be received with reverence. Without the offering, the Liturgy is not quite complete. There must not be excessive concern over 'disturbing' the people at collection time. Two Ushers with collection plates, shall walk down the center and side aisles, stop at the first pews, face the Holy Altar, make the sign of the Cross, and, after waiting for a moment, step back and pass the offering plates to the faithful in the pews. They shall face the Holy Altar while collecting the offering.

**Distribution of 'mas'** - Near the end of the Divine Liturgy the Ushers shall walk down and stand near the entrance of the side aisle, outside the Chancel, and wait for the Deacon to bring the Blessed Bread/Mas. The Ushers shall receive the plate of the Blessed Bread/Mas from the Deacon and shall walk back to the Narthex there to distribute it to the faithful as they leave the Church to return to their homes. The person giving the Blessed Bread shall say: May This Be Your Share And Portion From The Holy Liturgy (i.e. Mas Yev Pajhin Yeghitzi Kez I Soorp Badarakes). The person receiving shall say: My Portion is God Forever (i.e. Pajhin Im Asdvadz Havidyan).

**Candles** - It is one of the traditions of the Armenian Church to light candles as a form of piety and of offering oneself to God. A faithful, upon making a contribution toward the purchase of a candle, takes and lights it on the votive candle stand. This tradition should be encouraged. If so requested, an Usher may take and light the donated candle on behalf of the offerer. Ushers in charge of the table of the votive candles shall see to it that the candles burn as long as possible.